

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

Tom Dooley's road to greatness

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

Tom Dooley grew up in St. Louis. Everybody liked him. He could play the piano and he loved parties.

Tom wanted to become a famous doctor in St. Louis. That way he could take care of rich people and make a lot of money. People would think he was a great man.

So he went to college at Notre Dame and then to medical school. He didn't work as hard as he might have but he did well and had a good time.

Then he joined the Navy. He was sent on a ship to Indochina. One day he stood on the ship and looked out over the water. There were dozens of small boats, loaded with people. Tom had never seen such poor people in all his life. Many were sick too.

That night he couldn't sleep. "What will ever happen to those people?" he thought to himself.

"There are few doctors to help them."

As he tossed and turned, Tom thought about his dream of becoming a famous doctor back home. "There are hundreds of doctors in St. Louis. I wonder if that's really how to be famous?" he said. "The people here are so poor. This is where they need a doctor."

Over the next weeks and months Tom took care of thousands of people. Later, when he left the Navy, Tom went back to Indochina. His idea of greatness had changed now. It came from helping people who were in great need.

Tom found an orphan's home that had no doctor. There were 500 children living there. Their parents had been killed in the war.

One child was a beautiful young girl named Lia. She was 7 and her leg had been badly hurt.

Tom did everything he knew

how to do as a doctor. But her leg got worse and worse. He had to amputate her leg.

Tom loved Lia. He did everything he could to get her an artificial leg. Finally he succeeded.

He helped Lia learn to walk again. First with crutches. Then one day Lia stood up all alone without crutches. She was so happy. She took a step. Then another. She could walk all by herself.

She put her arms around Dr. Tom. The two were so happy, they cried.

"I'm so happy I came here," Tom thought to himself. "Here my life is worthwhile."

Tom stayed with the poor and sick of Vietnam and Laos. People all over the world began to hear of him. He became very famous. People called him "the splendid American."

Then Tom got sick. He had cancer. He kept taking care of the poor in his hospital until he could no longer do so. He died a young



man. But he found out what true greatness really was.

(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, Scripture stories and original stories for children.)

Hidden Words

Find the words hidden in the puzzle below. They can be vertical, horizontal or diagonal. All the words are in this week's children's story.

P	I	A	N	O	X	A	C	W	W
B	I	C	F	H	J	L	D	A	Q
M	P	N	A	L	C	R	S	R	T
L	I	A	D	Q	A	P	O	X	H
D	W	V	E	O	N	T	V	I	W
B	C	Y	K	A	C	J	X	L	R
O	E	F	B	O	E	H	U	G	I
A	N	V	D	N	R	M	I	O	S
T	O	M	U	D	Y	T	T	N	P
S	I	C	K	G	I	K	O	Z	A

WAR, PIANO, INDOCHINA, DOCTOR, CANCER, NAVY, BOATS, SICK, LIA, TOM

HOW ABOUT YOU?

- What do you dream of doing when you grow up?
- What does the word "ambition" mean? What did Tom Dooley do with his ambition?

Children's Reading Corner

"Mother Cabrini's Dream" is a story by Mary Montgomery. It tells about a little girl, Francesca Cabrini, whose ambition was to be a missionary nun. Her older sister told her, "You have big dreams but you are always sick. You can never be a missionary nun." This did not stop her. Though her health made her postpone her dream, after a time she started a new order of nuns. Later, in the year 1889, she moved from Italy to the United States and began a school, built an orphanage and took charge of a hospital. Today we remember all the good she did by praying to St. Francis Cabrini. (Winston Press, 430 Oak Grove, Minneapolis, Minn. 55403. 1979. Paperback, \$1.65.)



Discovery

Guiding children along the road of Christian discovery is the highest priority of Father Forest McAllister, O.F.M. With funding from the Catholic Church Extension Society, he serves the spiritual needs of those who live in isolated communities high in New Mexico's mountainous terrain.

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